The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS.

This is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
Sails the unshadowed main,—
The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
In gulfs enchanted, where the siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl!
And every chambered cell,
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
Before thee lies revealed,—
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed!

Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil:
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathèd horn!
While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that sings:—

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea.

—*O. W. Holmes.*

GROUNDS OF TRUST IN GOD.

"And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?"—MARK iv. 39, 40.

How does God make good a universal claim upon human faith?

I. His own faithfulness in outward nature, some page of which every man must daily read, is an open and enduring pledge of his equal faithfulness in spiritual things, that no intimation of intention to the human heart, no whisper of purposed good, kindling hope and partaking of the nature of a promise, shall fail of its accomplishment. The Psalmist *saw* this sign of God's truthfulness, his constancy to his word once spoken, wherever we can trace him, guaranteeing his constancy where we cannot. "Forever, O Lord, thy *word* is settled in heaven. Thy faithfulness is to all generations. Thou hast established the earth, and it abideth. They continue this day according to thine ordinances; for all are thy servants." The *constancy* of God, where common observation or science can follow him, is a sign of his character as the Teacher and Father of Spirits, which we do not sufficiently connect with the tenderness of his regard for man. For why does his power in any observed direction confine itself to appointed tracks, and go forth only in one order? Why does he never in the same circumstances depart from the once established custom of his way? Surely, he

is a God of law, in our sense of law,—that is, of invariable sequences,—only out of the wonderful condescension of his love. He imposes these uniform conditions on his own action only that man may be instructed —may learn, as in no other way he could, to partake and avail himself of God's wisdom and of God's power. These periodic successions of natural beauty, familiar, yet virtually infinite in variety, to us, do not exhaust the Almighty, are not perhaps peculiarly dear to him. These laws and properties of matter, relied upon by us, are not necessary directions of his power. His will could change it all; yet nothing fails, nothing is fickle. He works as steadfastly as though he were the servant of man, and not the free Lord of all things. An expectation created by him never disappoints. Man's collected lesson is never turned mockingly into vanity. What was true once remains true eternally. An observation of nature wisely made to-day serves the remotest ages. God keeps with us the compact of his works. And this is measureless goodness: it is an infinite condescension. A God who did not love us, who did not wish us to know and rely on him, who did not seek to have a moral claim upon our confidence, would not thus sustain our faith. He would mock our labor and our hopes. He would turn our wisdom into folly; what we had learned to-day make untrue to-morrow; lead us through painful processes, with eager expectations of like results, and fail us in the end. In this, his constancy to his ways, he has never shaken the faith of his children, though he has interpreted himself by showing in Christ the spirit in man that should be inspired by his will and moulded by his rule. God neither mocks nor is mocked. We may use or abuse his gifts. He remains faithful to the offered conditions. He does not disappoint hopes of his own raising; he does not countenance capricious fickleness; he does not avert natural consequences; he holds us fast in *personal* bonds. His laws do not fail us: his power does not succor us if we sin presumptuously. We must be true as he is true, our faith resting upon his faithfulness.

II. If we have this faith in God's faithfulness, then the personal relations he holds with us through the experiences he gives us are not merely present states of man: they are acts of divine promise, and his faithfulness in the natural world becomes voucher for those intimations of his ultimate love which these relations convey. Human life itself, with the faculties that accompany it, is surely a sufficient basis on which to rest God's claim upon the faith of man,—man as essentially he is, with a nature in harmony with the conditions amid which he is stationed, with intellect to interpret, with power to subdue and use, with love to make himself a home, with imperishable affections to reveal the prophetic nature of that home if he will only be true enough to ascribe the aspirations that are in him, not to himself, but to the inspirer of his heart. God's goodness it is that has given us the power to doubt his goodness. The creatures that have no hopes are troubled with no doubts. It is the vision of bliss he has opened on our souls that enables us to ask, Does God mean to mock us? If we had no faculties to acquaint us with higher things, we should have no opportunity of distrusting Him who has brought these higher things so nigh to us. If the first race of men, as they stood on the yet unconquered earth, could have had the present condition of human life and adornment, our mastery over and enjoyment of the world, intimated to them in a way analogous to that in which a heavenly existence is now revealed to us, *their* utter unbelief would have been much more reasonable than our present feebleness of faith in the heavenly consummations. For God, meanwhile, has been educating man to great thoughts and to vast hopes, habituating him to rich possessions and to mighty conquests. He has led us on to the belief respecting ourselves that with God all things are possible. Contemplate the first man placed upon this earth, left alone with the raw materials of nature, with its clay, its rocks, the things that lie buried in its strata. Could a more hopeless enterprise be conceived? Look now to the face of our present civilization for the measure of unfolded gifts, of hidden greatness, that God had lodged within him. Conceive him in his helplessness looking out upon the ocean, dark, mysterious, sundering. He has crossed it by a path that no fowl knoweth, that the vulture's eye hath not seen. Picture him lifting blank eyes to the midnight heavens. He has reduced

them to the most perfect of the sciences, interpreted their laws, and entered into the conceptions they give of the immensity of God's works and of the order of God's mind. And, with these hints of permitted fellowship with the author of being, can he be justified in distrusting any pledge of yet unattained good which God has whispered to him?

III. But more individually: Is there not a secret assurance to every man of, I will not say the happiness that is open to him, but of something infinitely higher than happiness,—of the *blessedness* that is open to him, the progress, the growth, the contentment of being, the resources for true life, simply in faithfulness to God and to his own spirit? Is not that sigh of every heart when it looks back upon life, and wishes it had the course to run again, that it might retrieve its errors and garner its possibilities, an acknowledgment of this? Let a man but recount his opportunities. He knows what he would be now if every day had been faithful, wise, and trusting, as every day might have been; what might now have been his knowledge or his works; what a home he might have made for himself in the hearts of men; what a harvest of blessings have laid up with God when he rests from his labors, and his works shall follow him. And does not every man feel that still he is free to take up the great work of life and growth, and to pursue it with the same certainty of success? And is not this conviction of the very essence of faith, the most living proof of the goodness of God working in us that it may generate faith?—*John Hamilton Thom.*

THE STILL HOUR.

CONSIDER THE LILIES.

He hides within the lily
A strong and tender care,
That wins the earth-born atoms
To glory of the air;
He weaves the shining garments
Unceasingly and still,
Along the quiet waters,
In niches of the hill.

We linger at the vigil
With him who bent the knee
To watch the old-time lilies
In distant Galilee;
And still the worship deepens
And quickens into new,
As brightening down the ages
God's secret thrilleth through.

O Toiler of the lily,
Thy touch is in the man!
No leaf that dawns to petal
But hints the angel plan.
The flower-horizons open!
The blossom vaster shows!
We hear thy wide world's echo,—
See how the lily grows!

Shy yearnings of the savage,
Unfolding thought by thought,
To holy lives are lifted,
To visions fair are wrought.
The races rise and cluster,
And evils fade and fall,
Till Chaos blooms to beauty,
Thy purpose crowning all.

—*W. C. Gannett.*

There are hours in life when nature is transfigured, when we seem to see the soul in nature. In moments of depression the heart is cold and dead, and the outward world seems cold and dead also. But the soul which is filled with faith, hope, and love fills all outward objects with the same joy. So Saint Francis went out to pray, in company with the birds. So Saint Bonaventura describes the rapture of devotion as influencing the heart, and making us wish to embrace every creature of God. So Socrates, sitting under the plane-tree, near the Ilissus, says, "I seem, O Phædrus, to be borne away by a divine impression coming from this lovely place; for the place where we sit seems also divine." Socrates, therefore, and the mediæval saints had the same experience which Wordsworth expresses, when he speaks of

"That blessed mood,
In which the burden of the mystery
Of all this unintelligible world
Is lightened,—that serene and blessed mood
In which, the breath of this corporeal frame
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul;
While, with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things."

Nature grows alive with the life of the soul. The romantic view of nature, expressed by the great modern poets, in which it is all alive, comes from the Christian

spirit in modern thought. The ancients knew very little of this. George Fox, the Quaker, says that, when he was first converted to faith in the Divine Love, and went out into the fields, the whole world around him glowed with new life. The skies were full of a divine presence. The air breathed a divine love. The birds in their songs seemed to say, "Let us praise God." The same spirit in the Hebrew Psalms calls on the hills to clap their hands, and the waters above and below to be thankful. So is nature transfigured by the soul, and grows full of life. We see God in nature, and our hearts drink peace from sky and land. An ineffable beauty is spread over the scene; and we wist not what to say, for language cannot utter it. There are some days which are like a concert or oratorio, when earth, air, trees, sunshine, blue sky, grass, are all in the same happy mood, all in tune together, no discord to jar the full harmony. In such days the earth becomes a Bible, the rocky strata its book of Genesis, the singing of the birds its book of Psalms, the air full of sunlight and fragrance its Gospels, and the changing lights, the advancing hours, its book of Revelation, showing to us how God is all in all.

These hours of transfigured life are so precious that we wish to detain them. But this is not the law of our existence. When Peter said, "It is good to be here," he said the truth; but when he added, "Let us build three tents (or huts) and stay here," he wist not what he said. Monasticism tried to build such tents, in these high places of life, and to live on the mount of transfiguration, but failed. It is not meant that we should *live* always on this mountain, in this high lonely solitude of worship. We must come down, as Jesus did, to mingle with the world and do our work in the world.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

THE BIBLE CLASS.

LIFE IN CAPERNAUM.—HEALING THE LEPER.

We have seen that Jesus, after the Sabbath of wonders at Capernaum, rose very early, and retired into a lonely place to strengthen himself by prayer. A serious difficulty confronted him. His primary work was a religious and spiritual one. But the mission of a healer of physical disease seemed to be almost forced upon him. How could he refuse to help the poor suffering ones who thronged around him? And yet to allow himself to become a mere healer of disease would not only occupy all his time and strength, but would divert the mind of the public from the very things to which he desired to call attention.

The story goes on:—

"And Simon, and they that were with him, followed after him; and they found him, and say unto him, All are seeking thee. And he saith unto them, Let us go elsewhere, into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for to this end came I forth."

That is, his mission was, *first* to preach; not merely to heal.

"And he went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out devils."

We come now to the story of the leper, told in three Gospels (Matt. viii. 2–4, Mark i. 40–45, Luke v. 12–16), but most fully and circumstantially in Mark (the account received from Peter). In Mark we have the phrases "beseeching him and kneeling down to him," "being moved with compassion," and the emphatic "*strictly*" or *sternly* "charged him," etc. All three have the expression, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Two of them, "*Lord*, if thou wilt," etc. (these are Matthew and Luke: Mark has simply, "If thou wilt"). All three report the words of Jesus, "I will: be thou made clean." And all say that Jesus "stretched forth his hand, and touched him."

"*Stretched forth his hand*"; why not merely "*touched him*"?

There is an unconscious witness to the truth of the narrative in the circumstantial minuteness of the account, narrating an incident which struck the bystanders with amazement. To *touch* a leper was not only against the law: it was the last thing a Jewish rabbi would think of doing.

Rabbinism regarded leprosy as a punishment for sin, or rather for *sins*, many and great, repeated after admonition. The attitude of a rabbi toward a leper was not that of compassion: it was disgust and scornful harshness. One rabbi boasted that he always threw stones at a leper, to keep him at

a distance. Others, not quite so inhuman, hid themselves or ran away.

How happened it that this leper had gained such an impression of the character of Jesus that, instead of fleeing from him, —(and the law enjoined a certain distance to be kept),—he approached, and approached with perfect confidence in the power and the compassion of Jesus? He had either listened to him, preaching, or had heard of him from others. "Moved with compassion," says Mark (Peter, perhaps, standing near Jesus, observed the expression of his face), "he stretched forth his hand, and touched him." "Touched him!" To touch a person ill with the plague would cause less surprise. The motion of that hand, so unexpected, so astonishing to the spectators that the narrative retains this form in all three histories, "he stretched forth his hand," —they could hardly believe it, as they watched him; and the first verbal report was no doubt told with three exclamation points. The proof of the genuineness of a story lies exactly in these little things.

The tenderness and sympathy of Jesus have been more fully recognized than his courage. Here is a very strong illustration of both qualities, so wonderfully united in him who was Son of man and Son of God. If, as I believe, the priests at Jerusalem had already received and rejected his first overtures; if, already, in opposition to their views, he had roused their enmity still farther by his disregard of Rabbinic and Levitical law, by healing on the Sabbath, by the sermon at Nazareth, by his attitude toward Samaritan and Roman, perhaps by the call of Matthew,—he now placed a powerful weapon in their hands by touching a leper. Some infringements of the law of Rabbinism may not have affected nearly the Levitical code; and the Pharisees would be more excited than the priests by the friendly spirit toward the Romans shown by Jesus, for the priests were allied with the Romans and with Herod, the Pharisees being the liberal and popular leaders. But disregard of the laws concerning leprosy placed Jesus very much at the mercy of the priests. Let them once have an opportunity to say that Jesus went about touching lepers (and thus spreading the disease), and they would have him in their power.

Read here the painful story of Uzziah (2 Kings xxvi.), and observe the dangerous power given to the high priest. He had power to *pronounce* any man a leper; and Uzziah became a victim because he had undertaken to burn incense in the temple, in which he was justified by precedent and custom. The high priest (and the other priests in the temple) *saw* the leprosy appear on Uzziah's forehead; and, being pronounced a leper, he was forced to dwell in a leper-house until his death.

Such a fate might have been in store for Jesus; but, if before the priest had time to hear of the matter from common report the leper showed himself and was pronounced clean, the danger would be averted. The priest might possibly say later that the man was not—had not been—actually a leper. This is the explanation of the story given by some of the modern critics. If it were proved beyond question that it was a case of genuine leprosy, the healing of the disease was not only a testimony to the wonderful power of Jesus: it also showed that the touch could work no harm. In either case Jesus was safe.

Unfortunately, the charge "strictly" given by Jesus was too well needed, and was not observed. The man "began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter." Thus Jesus was obliged to retire apart, perhaps because of the crowds who sought him, but also, probably, because of the danger from his enemies,—the priests.

Mark says, "Jesus could no more enter a city, but was without in desert places." Luke, "He withdrew himself into the deserts, *and prayed.*" L. F. C.

[The editor will answer any questions on passages in the New Testament, so far as it is in her power. Address Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.]

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

WHAT SHALL WE PLAY TO-DAY?

Twelfth Paper.

What, play on *Sunday?* Yes, I think so; and I hope the following suggestions will not only not shock, but that they may even find favor with strict religionists. Sunday, to me, is the loveliest day of the seven,—rain or sunshine, able or not to go to church: it is the ever-recurring Easter, a

joyful festival; and I wish I could make it so to every child in the world. Let us try what we can do in that direction. "Mony a mickle maks a muckle"; and, if we can bring one ray of sunshine to a day which the children too generally dread, we shall be doing well. In the first place, there is the "getting ready" for Sunday, which should be so managed for the children that they would regard it as a *privilege*, not a *task*. A special hour might be given to it on Saturday night; and the children themselves should set the nursery in *perfect* order, putting sewing baskets and the ordinary toys out of sight, replacing these with the books for Sunday reading and study, and the material for Sunday occupations.

The *dolls* are a problem. Personally, I always *have* despised them; but, as they seem to be a necessary evil, we must do the best we can. As the little folk love them, and attribute to them human qualities, I do not like the idea of condemning them to the darkness of closet or trunk and wilful neglect for over twenty-four hours. Nor, on the *other* hand, do I approve of playing with them on the Sabbath. It might be well to attire them neatly, and seat them in the play-house or on their little chairs, thus allowing them to retain, in a measure, their claim on the children.

It depends entirely on the domestic arrangements, and on the customs of the family in regard to attending church, etc., what period the children can have for study (and, surely, this will have place in every household); and then there is still the *idle hour*. This is the opportunity the loving mother will seize. It seems to me there are many legitimate occupations which will come to the minds of wise women, and it is my duty to mention something in my capacity as kindergartner; and I would suggest that Froebel's gifts, from the third to the seventh inclusive, be reserved for Sunday work. All this is *building* material, all cut so as to be of value to the children in their efforts. The third gift consists of eight one-inch cubes: the others are more elaborate. In addition to the cubes we have oblongs and triangles of different sizes. Even with the eight cubes a neat little church may be built. Set three cubes in a row, touching each other (this we call the ground plan), place three others on them, use the two that remain to make the tower, making a column of *four* at the left hand. Taking the fifth gift with its triangles, a whole village with its church can be modelled. Single cubes surmounted by single triangles make cute little houses, and our plain little church may assume a peaked roof and a tower with a belfry. If the children be allowed to add the second gift and the staffs to the material mentioned (and I see no objection to this), with *such* wealth they will do some beautiful building. Appropriate subjects will not be wanting. Representations of the churches they attend, or of others, pictures of which have been seen, will soon be forthcoming. One dear little boy, since passed to the heavenly country, placed side by side for me before he was four years old fac-similes of a church which the inhabitants of a certain old-fashioned borough lovingly call "Little Trinity," and of his father's mission church among the Dakota Indians. The resemblance was excellent: the differences were marked. If the children are at a loss, older heads might suggest,—the Tower of Babel, the Temple of the Winds, the prison of Paul and Silas, etc. Once in a while the latter might be so constructed that a miniature earthquake in the shape of a shake of the table would topple it over. Children enjoy a catastrophe of this kind.

But we err if this be made an occupation for the fingers *only*. There should be conversations about the places represented, and the children encouraged to memorize salient facts. A cousin of Little Lord Fauntleroy (at least they are enough alike to be cousins) had made for him one Sunday on a kindergarten table a model of the spot whence Paul addressed the men of Athens. He was so delighted that he begged that it be left for the next Sunday. As it was vacation, this was possible; and that little heap of blocks furnished us material for several conversations, and the fair-haired laddie learned many of the sayings of the wise apostle.

Do not misunderstand my plea for recreation and variety for the children on Sunday. It is a holiday: it rests with us to make it a *full* holiday, a *blessed holyday*. "Auntie," said Fauntleroy's cousin, on the occasion of a short school vacation, "what *is* a hollow day? Is it like a box, when you open it,

there is nothing inside?" Let us see to it that, as far as in us lies, our Sundays are not hollow days!

ANNIE SWAYZE BRECK.

[The editor hopes that this charming paper of Mrs. Breck's may suggest to other mothers to give us their ideas in regard to ways of spending Sunday, so that it may be a happy day for the little ones.]

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all matter for this department to Mrs. Henry R. Hallett, 310 Harvard Street, Brookline, Mass.*]

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR GIVERS AND RECEIVERS.

1. If you see a book offered in the Book Club which you desire to read, write directly to the address of the person who offers it. If she receives more than one request, the addresses of those to whom she cannot respond may be sent to the Book Club, and the request printed there.

2. If you have a book or paper to give or lend, write directly to the Book Club as above, and offer it with your address.

3. In sending a book, enclose, when possible, a P.O. card for response, already addressed.

4. In thanking the person who has sent you a book, always mention the name of the book. Say, "I have received 'Black Beauty,'" or whatever the book may be; not, "I have received *that book*." This saves a busy person a good deal of time. Otherwise, she must consult her list constantly to find out what book has been received safely.

N.B.— Do not send books to the Book Club. Send only the *offer* to the club. To send the *book* involves packing it *twice* and paying postage *twice*, where once would suffice.

Those who offer books frequently receive notes, saying, "Shall I return you this book, or keep it, or pass it on?" *Unless otherwise stated, all* books offered in this department are *given*, and the postage paid.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Hallett, asking, "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it: else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Hallett, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

Please write only on one side of the paper in sending lists or letters to the secretary.

A four-pound package is the most that can be sent by *mail*. The postage on four pounds of *magazines* is 16 cts., on four pounds of *books* 32 cts.

Postage on magazines and all periodicals (weighing less than four pounds), 1 cent for four ounces; on bound books, 1 cent for two ounces. *Paper* books are now sent by mail at the same rate as magazines, *when issued periodically*.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.?

Mrs. Henry C. Weston, the Uplands, Beverly Farms, Mass., has several copies of each of the following books which she will give and send: "Mosses from an Old Manse," "House of Seven Gables," Hawthorne; "Essays of Elia," Lamb; "Knight Errant," "In the Golden Days," Edna Lyall; "Henry Esmond," Thackeray; "John Halifax," Miss Mulock; "Wide, Wide World," Wetherell; "Ships that pass in the Night," Harraden; "Atlas of the World."

Mrs. Evvie Bodge, West Levant, Maine, writes: "I offer the *Ladies' Home Journal* for the year 1892 and a few other odd papers to any one who will pay postage. Would gladly pay it myself if it were possible.

"I heartily thank those who have sent me reading. Would like to write each one my thanks, but must include them all here. For myself, I would like 'Ben-Hur' and the 'Lamplighter.' Also any illustrated papers for my little ones, as they enjoy the pictures so much; and I am obliged to leave them alone part of the time every day on account of my work."

The following books are offered by the L. A. H. of Clinton, Mass.: "Black Beauty"; "Mayor of Casterbridge," Thomas Hardy; "The Last Penacook," Abel Berry; "Silence of Dean Maitland," Maxwell Grey; "Mistress Beatrice Cope," M. E. Le Clero; "Derrick Vaughn," Edna Lyall; "Among the Hills," Whittier; "Three Men in a Boat," J. K. Jerome; "Christie," Mrs. Walton; "Sandford and Merton, in Words of one Syllable." Address Maude A. Miles, 38 Cedar Street, Clinton, Mass.

Mrs. Thomas L. Johnson, 171 Kennard Street, Cleveland, Ohio, offers *Vick's Magazine* and others on flower culture.

Books offered by Mrs. M. E. Bennett, Lexington, Mass.: "Our Eternal Homes," "Music Hall Sermons," W. H. H. Murray; "Branches of Palm," Short; "Selections and Allegories."

A correspondent has the *Congregationalist* for 1893, which she will be glad to send

away to any one paying postage. Apply to Mrs. Hallett, 310 Harvard Street, Brookline.

Miss Mary E. Sandford, Santuit, Mass., P. O. Box 118, offers several copies of *Youth's Companion* for 1889 and 1890; eleven annual reports of Perkins Institute for the Blind (from which school she graduated), containing much interesting reading matter, and four copies of the *Mentor*, a magazine published in the interests of the blind throughout the world; "Joshua," Georg Ebers; "A Hardy Norseman"; a little book entitled "Hospital for Broken Resolutions"; "Allan's Wife," Rider Haggard; seven numbers of the *Ladies' Home Journal* for 1893.

"The above-named reading matter I will send to any one who wants it if they will send postage, which I would gladly supply; but I cannot afford it."

I will send story papers, religious papers, farming papers, poultry papers, book-keeping papers, newspapers, scientific papers, Canadian papers, to any one who can send postage, as much as the postage will carry. Charles T. Zepp, Box 51, Melrose, Maryland.

I offer for scrap-books some very pretty illustrated catalogues, portraits of authors, etc.; also artistic illustrations from magazines and book catalogues; and reading material of different kinds,— stories, poems, and religious extracts. Also, for a young girl interested in art, articles called "Our Sketching Club," taken from the magazine, *Old and New*. Address Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Magnolia, Mass.

A friend offers through me a copy of the *Outlook*, the weekly edited by Rev. Lyman Abbott, one of the best family weeklies in the United States. Address Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Magnolia, Mass.

Miss Lizzie C. Estey, 1075 Adams Street, Dorchester, Mass., offers Andersen's "Danish Tales"; "Home Influence"; "School Life," by a Wolvertonian; "Works of Charles Lamb"; "Daily Food"; "Psalms and Hymns."

I send a list of the books and magazines that our club has collected for distribution: —

Harper's Monthly for 1892 and 1893, *Century* for 1892; odd numbers of the *Century* and *Scribner's* for 1893, *Outing*, *Cosmopolitan*, *North American Review*, *Harper's Bazar*, *Review of Reviews*, *Once a Week*, *Ladies' Home Journal*; bound *Wide Awake* and *Ladies' Home Journal* for 1892; *Little Men and Women* for 1891; "Black Beauty"; "The Castle of Otranto," Horace Walpole; "A Ranchman's Stories," Howard Seely; "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," Byron; "A Marriage at Sea," W. Clark Russell; "Book of Snobs," W. M. Thackeray; the "Yellow Plush Papers," W. M. Thackeray; "Jackanapes," Mrs. Ewing; "Marooner," W. Clark Russell; "On the Folk'sle Head," W. Clark Russell; History of Thomas Carlyle; History of Sir Christopher Wren; "Last Days of Pompeii," Lytton; "David Copperfield," Dickens; "A Strange Infatuation," Lewis Harrison; "The Nineteenth Century," Robert McKenzie; "Christmas Stories," Dickens; "Great Expectations," Dickens; First and Second Series of the "Saxe Holm Stories." Address Alice L. Campbell, Secretary Calvary Cheerful Letter Club, 993 Cedar Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio.

The editor has just received from a friend a most valuable offer, *Babyhood*, now the *Mother's Nursery Guide*, as it comes out monthly. The value of this little magazine to a young mother, especially where doctors are not easily to be consulted, can scarcely be estimated. Send requests directly to Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Magnolia, Mass. If several requests are received, those which come too late for this offer will be printed in September number, under the heading "Requests."

We hope that our Cheerful Letter Exchange friends will do a little summer work by sending to our secretary the names of "shut-ins" in lonely country places. Also remember how many of our invalids enjoy a little breath of sea air in the shape of a note from a correspondent.

REQUESTS.

Standing requests for libraries from: —

Rev. George H. Taylor, Rocky Ford, Colorado;

Mrs. W. F. James, Bibb, Comanche County, Texas;

Mrs. C. S. Stowell, Magnolia, Boulder County, Colorado;

Rev. Charles Graves, Box 328, Anamosa, Iowa;

Mrs. D. Jayne, Cayuta, Schuyler County, New York;

Mrs. Emma Miner, Lisbon, New Hampshire;

Stephen D. Rhoden, La Pine, Crenshaw County, Alabama.

Mrs. Stowell, Mrs. Jayne, and Mrs. Miner, all need children's books. Mrs. Stowell also asks for books for a mining population (many are educated people). Mr. Graves asks for a Sunday-school and parish library, Mr. Rhoden for an industrial school for colored children.

(If any address is omitted that should be in this list of standing requests, we shall be glad to insert it in the next number.)

Mrs. Sarah Hunt, Box 151, Marietta, Georgia, would like *Harper's Bazar* regularly.

Mrs. J. J. Hardin, Huntley, Nebraska, asks for "Garlands for Christ and his People," "Robinson Crusoe," and Ray's "Arithmetic," third part, "The Mother's Last Words" (a poem.)

Miss C. A. Sheldon, Albion, Dane County, Wisconsin, would be pleased to receive either one of the following papers: the *Household*, *Housewife*, and *Housekeeper*.

Mrs. O. R. Tyler, Applegate Post-office, Sanilac County, Michigan, would like a Bible in coarse print, and also some illustrated magazines.

One of my shut-in correspondents has written me of *The Cheerful Letter* Society, who send reading matter to shut-ins not able to buy it, and gave me your address. I am a shut-in, not sick, but a cripple. I have no reading except what is sent me by the shut-in society. I am a widow. I have nothing but what I earn with my hands. If you could send me the *Household* or some other paper like it, I would be thankful indeed; but, if it is not convenient to send me any, I shall be satisfied. Address Mrs. A. C. Earle, Marengo, Ohio.

Mrs. M. L. Williams, Godwin, North Carolina, asks for "Prince of India," by Gen. Lew Wallace.

Mrs. Mary David, Huntley, Nebraska, asks for History United States, "Lady of Lyons," "Two Margarets," and "Beatrice," by Rider Haggard. She is a widow with four children from eleven to two years old, and would like some stories for children.

Mrs. Belle Blackey, Pelican Rapids, Minnesota, and Mrs. K. D. Stafford, Bradford, Texas, each wish a dictionary.

Mrs. R. F. Evans, Shelbyville, Bedford County, Tennessee, asks for books for the Sunday-school and Parish Library. They have not even been able this quarter to get the Lesson Leaflets.

(It would be well to mention what denominational literature you prefer.)

Mrs. Susan R. Chapman, Washington, Louisiana, wishes reading matter.

Mrs. M. C. Lawrason, Wicker, Cumberland County, North Carolina, would like *Harper's Magazine* or *Harper's Bazar* for the current year.

A REQUEST AND OFFER.

I have received several books from some of the kind members of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, who are so nobly trying to brighten the dark paths of less favored ones; and yet, like little Oliver, I ask for "more."

I am sixty-two, and have many infirmities, and am much shut in by circumstances,—poverty and isolation; and there are so many things I want to know, so many books I have heard of and want to see, before I go hence. I should be thankful for any of the following, no matter how shabby, if readable: anything of George MacDonald's excepting "Donal Grant," "Wilfred Cumbermede," "Warlock," and the "Elect Lady,' any of Thackeray's but "Vanity Fair," of Mrs. Stowe's but "Uncle Tom" and "Dred," any of Mrs. Rose Terry Cooke's or Miss Jewett's, any by John Burroughs or Thoreau.

As some return, I would send to any one sending me any of these books a few bulbs of four kinds of narcissus; namely, double and single daffodils, yellow, and double and single poet's narcissus, white. If the sender did not wish for them personally, I would send to any address given. These flowers would be a pleasure to any invalid; for they are hardy, early-blooming, beautiful, and fragrant, and require no care after setting (in October and November) save to

be divided once in three or four years. For twenty-five cents (silver) I would send three of each kind to any address, and would use part of the money to send bulbs to shut-ins. I cannot enter into any correspondence concerning these bulbs, only to send plainly address and postpaid.

Ready in August. Address Mrs. F. E. Briggs, La Center, Washington.

Dear Friends,—A sample copy of *The Cheerful Letter* was handed me not long since, and I am very much pleased with it. I am the mother of five children. George is fourteen, Mary eight, Alvin four, Ralf two, my baby is only four days old. I wish to become a member of the Cheerful Letter Exchange. Those of you who are able to spare books for my children, such will be thankfully received. What reading that is sent me I will lend to others, and will use my influence to get subscribers to *Cheerful Letter*. Best wishes to all. (Mrs.) Martha Giesy, Olympia, Washington.

Dear Cheerful Letter Friends,—I now wish to thank you for your kindness in response to my request printed in the May number. I have received "Gentle Measures," "Black Beauty," and several packages of papers and small books. My health is some better now; and I now send my little ones to Sabbath school, and shall try to send them, and I hope to go with them to church. The church is so far away I cannot go as often as I wish I could; have not been for several months. But, now that my lameness is less troublesome I shall attend church as often as possible. For years I have been in the habit of giving reading to many friends and others in need of it, to many sad, lonely ones, to the sick, and to little children who do not have many pleasures of life. My life is so sad that my heart goes out to all in trouble. *The Cheerful Letter* is a great comfort to me, as is all good reading. I cannot work all the time, yet have to do my work. I work awhile, and, while resting, read. I received a package of magazines called the *Household* They are very useful to me and others. I thank all who have sent reading to me. It cheers my home, and then goes to others. Among them are two invalids, sick girls,—one has been sick sixteen years; another is an orphan cripple,—she never took a step alone; two orphan children, one ten, the other fifteen, the last sick with consumption; two widows; and several poor families. I take pleasure in the work, and add to the reading the gift of flowers. I will close, thanking all who have been so kind to help me in the good work. Mrs. Albert Thompson, Dexter, Maine.

P.S.—My little daughter wishes to thank the little twelve-year-old girl who sent *Chatterbox* and some Sunday and temperance papers. They were very good. She would have written, only she did not know the name of the town or State. Will she please send her address?

Dear Cheerful Letter Friends,—I feel that I must write to you all this lovely June day. Dear friends, I know that I have had your prayers. Oh, what a help they have been to me and mine! Just listen: the best is yet to tell. For nearly two years we had to stay in the dreary swamp where we had no schools, churches, or even roads. I have tried to be patient, and God in his goodness has blessed us. I am very, very thankful to tell all of my *Cheerful Letter* friends of God's goodness to us. We have a little home at last one mile from Washington, Louisiana. I think it is glorious to be settled near church and schools, on high land, among nice, refined people again. Do you not all rejoice with me? God has answered my prayer. Yes, dear friends, I have been prayed out of the swamp, thank God! Sincerely, Mrs. M. A. Smith, Washington, Louisiana, Box 22.

May I be allowed to ask through *The Cheerful Letter* that books suitable for invalids may be sent to the Victoria Hospital, Fredericton, New Brunswick? They have patients of all ages, both public and private. The hospital is crippled for want of funds, and there is not a free public library in the whole province. District libraries and school libraries are few and small. A. L. Watson, 22 Cameron Avenue, West Somerville, Mass.

The Cheerful Letter was sent me by a kind lady. And I wrote to several ladies for books, and have received so many; and I feel so thankful for them. I have a lot of Columbian stamps; and, if any one would like to have them, I would send them some with pleasure. I would be delighted to receive *The Cheerful Letter*. Believe me yours

in Him, Mrs. Jennie Tatum, Tatum, Orange County, Virginia.

I should like to become a member of the Cheerful Letter Club. My wife is in the insane asylum; and I am left with three little children under seven years old. Last winter I lived all alone on a farm with the two eldest, and did my own housework. Sometimes it was forty degrees below zero. Any reading will be very welcome. B. B. Beddome, Minnedosa, Manitoba, Canada.

Miss Rachel Vaughan, Glade Creek, Tennessee, asks for *The Cheerful Letter*, and would be thankful for reading matter. She especially wishes to obtain Pineo's Grammar.

I would like to call the attention of the readers of *The Cheerful Letter* to the great need for school books now felt by the people of the Sea Islands, whose homes and possessions were so ruthlessly swept away by the cyclone of last August. Now that the more pressing needs of hunger and nakedness are being gradually supplied, the means to carry on their schools becomes a question of great importance. How bravely they have struggled to keep them in operation even in the time of the greatest need, the following extract from a letter of Miss E. Murray will show:—

"Many thanks for your offer of reading and school-books. They would be very useful, especially papers like the *Youth's Companion* for the older scholars. They do like to take them home and read them aloud to their admiring elders; and even those who cannot read enjoy the pictures. *Our* school, I am thankful to say, was not injured; but nearly all the county school-houses went down. The people could not buy books, and the teachers had to put in practice the normal lessons I had taught them, and teach reading, arithmetic, and grammar from the blackboard without books. School books in sets of six or more would be a great help. *Single books are not much use.* We have infant, primary, intermediate, grammar, and high or normal departments, and can use almost all kinds of books.

"The address should be Miss E. Murray, care of Capt. Aleck Brown, Savannah, Georgia. If by mail, Miss E. Murray, Frogmore, Beaufort County, South Carolina."

Mrs. W. A. Cram, Hampton Falls, New Hampshire.

(Sets of school-books discarded perhaps might be collected.)

The editor reminds all the kind givers that the books will go farther and do more good if Mrs. Hallett is told of all that are sent. When a particular book is *asked* for in *Cheerful Letter*, it becomes *necessary* to write to Mrs. Hallett before sending it, else several duplicate copies go to one person and others receive none.

Dear Mrs. Hallett,—I write this to thank you for the favors I have received from the Book Club. Since my name was in *Cheerful Letter* I have received a number of books, all of which I have acknowledged when an address was sent. A person who has never been reduced to having only one pleasure in life they can enjoy does not know what a favor they are bestowing in sending a few books to an invalid who cannot get them otherwise. I would ask that such favors be continued, for which I return thanks in advance. Very sincerely yours, Mrs. E. F. Carney, 205 Hanover Street, Manchester, New Hampshire.

To the Editor of The Cheerful Letter,—As nothing has been offered for the Amusement Column, proposed by a correspondent, I venture to send the following riddle, which is so old that it may be new to some readers: —

RIDDLE.

BY MARY HOWITT.

From rosy bowers we issue forth,
From east, from west, from south, from north;
Unseen, unfelt by night and day,
Abroad we take our airy way.

We foster love, we kindle strife,
The bitter and the sweet of life.
Piercing and sharp, we wound like steel:
Then, smooth as oil, those wounds we heal.

Not strings of pearl are valued more,
Nor diamonds set in golden ore;
Yet thousands of us every day,
Worthless and vile, are thrown away.

Ye wise, secure with bars of brass
The double doors through which we pass;
For, once escaped, back to our cell
No human art can us compel.

(We will insert the answer next time.)

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

Please observe that during the months of June, July, August, and September our treasurer's *personal* address is Miss Louise Howe, Nahant, Mass. Subscriptions may always be sent to her at 25 Beacon Street, Boston.

The editor's personal address during July, August, and September is Magnolia, Mass. But communications addressed to her in Jamaica Plain will reach her after a short delay.

Will our friends kindly notice that *requests for reading* and offers of the same should not be addressed to the editor, but to the secretary of the Book Club, Mrs. Hallett.

Our Book Club department has grown so large that we shall ask of all who, in the future, write to us for books, to send the name of some minister, as a reference; when possible, the minister of the church to which they belong.

Our object being more especially to give good books, we shall be obliged to omit requests for other articles. Such requests are often printed in the *Housewife* and in the papers of shut-in societies.

The editor will be very glad to receive material for the Amusement Column, which will always be printed when there is room. The Book Club usually takes precedence of other matter. But a little amusement will, no doubt, make our paper more attractive, and be appreciated, especially by invalids.

We make the following suggestions to members of the Cheerful Letter Exchange:

In sending a bound book through the mail, wrap it up carefully in several thicknesses of paper. Protect the corners, if possible. One thin piece of paper is not enough.

Keep your correspondents supplied with P.O. cards. By this we mean, not only send one card or envelope when you send a book or letter, but send a few extra cards, so that they may be able to write a request for a book which they see in *The Cheerful Letter*. Many of our shut-ins are too remote from a post-office to have the opportunity often to buy cards or stamps; and many lack even the very few cents that they need to provide the means of writing. A P.O. card at hand is a real convenience.

Mrs. A. J. Witt, Portersville, Tulare County, California, asks for more reading. She is grateful for what has been sent. She is a cripple and a shut-in.

The editor has received from a friend the offer of some hardy bulbs, to be given to invalids, so long as the supply lasts. Address during August and September Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Magnolia Mass.

N.B.— Those who are able to pay postage are asked to mention it.

The editor calls especial attention to the requests for libraries. Good standard books and magazines will do more good there than anywhere.

We have received many offers of books in response to the letter without signature printed in the July number of *Cheerful Letter*. So we hope that the next offers that come will be for the benefit of others.

MISCELLANEOUS.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Louise Howe, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., or Nahant, Mass.

EDITOR OF "CHEERFUL LETTER,"—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. Henry R. Hallett, 310 Harvard Street, Brookline, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals may be sent to the treasurer as above. The subscription is fifty cents a year.

Notice that requests for membership and for correspondents go to Miss Langmaid, our secretary; requests for books and offers of books, to Mrs. Hallett; and to Miss Clarke only articles for insertion in the paper (not Book Club matter). All such material should be written on *one side only* of the paper, and sent by the first of the month *before* that in which it is printed.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Ellen R. Dewson, Quincy, Mass. Please give full name and address. Many of our members take the paper, in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.

Will all subscribers or receivers of *The Cheerful Letter*, whose copy does not come regularly, or comes not correctly addressed, be kind enough to notify Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.?

Send also all notices of *changes of address* to Miss Langmaid. Please do not send these notices to the editor, as it causes delay in the correction.